

The Bethel Courier.

VOLUME XXII, NUMBER 1

SPRING 1998

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of 30 June 1998, nearly \$250,000 has been raised from cash, stock, gifts, pledges, grants, and challenges from over 150 donors.

Room Naming Opportunities (\$25,000 or more)

Robert and Janet Spidell, Anaheim, CA
Henry and Patricia Stewart, Boston, MA

Dr. Nathaniel Tuckerman True Associates (Donors of \$10,000 or more)

Bingham Trust
Walter and Carolyn Hatch, Bethel
Michael S. Stowell, Lovettsville, VA

Enoch Foster Partners (Donors of \$5000 to \$9999)

Anonymous
Robert Goodwin, Norway
Grantham, Mayo, Van Otterloo & Co. LLC, Boston, MA
Edmond and Sudie Vachon, Bethel

Agnes Hastings Straw Circle (Donors of \$2500 to \$4999)

Kenneth and Gwyneth Bohr, Bethel
Roxanne Twitchell Sly, Booklin

Dr. William B. Lapham Honor Society (Donors of \$1000-\$2499)

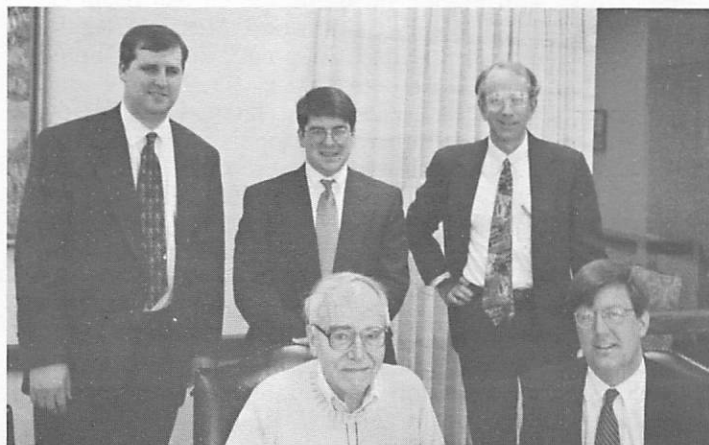
Rep. Alvin and Lee Barth, Bethel
Bethel Rotary Club in Honor of Roger R. Conant and
John B. Head

Ted and Kitty Chadbourne, Bethel
Stephen and Lynda Chandler, Brunswick
Dana and Barbara Douglass, Bethel
Exxon Corporation, Houston, TX
William and Susan Herlihy, Bethel
Dick and Lorrie Hoeh, Bethel
Jane and Richard Hosterman, West Bethel
Arlan and Eleanor Jodrey, Bethel
Rebecca Kendall, Bethel
Alden and Mabel Kennett, Bethel
Thomas H. Mitchell, Culver City, CA
Dean and Priscella Walker, Kittery
Stephen and Margaret Wight, Newry

21st Century Club
(Donors of \$999 in honor of the Society's occupancy of
the Foster-Straw House in 1999)
Stanley R. Howe, Bethel

(continued on page 2)

SOCIETY OFFICIALLY ACQUIRES ELMS PROPERTY FROM BETHEL INN



Participating in the closing on the Elms property at the offices of Perkins, Thompson, Hinckley and Keddy in Portland on 6 May 1998 were, front row, Walter Hatch, Society president; William White, representing the Bethel Inn; back row, left to right, Sean Cameron of Northeast Bank, Paul Pietropaoli of Perkins, Thompson, Hinckley and Keddy (attorney for the Society), and Lawrence Walden of Curtis, Thaxter, Stevens, Broder and Micoleau (attorney for the Bethel Inn).



Following the closing on May 6 more than thirty Society members gathered in front of the Elms property to show their support for the project. The building was believed built in 1821 by O'Neil Robinson (1797-1867), who married Mrs. Moses Mason's sister Betsey (1797-1878). Other owners of the property prior to the Bethel Inn include Robert Chapman, Enoch Foster, and William and Agnes Straw. The Society will lease the property to the Bethel Inn until April 1999.

Robert Chapman Founders

(Donors of \$500 to \$998)

Anonymous

Geoffrey and Martha Clark, Portsmouth, NH

Ronald and Marguerite Kendall, Bethel

John and Margaret King, Lakeland, FL

Dr. John and Ann Knowles, Yarmouth

Helen Morton, Bethel

Persis Post, Bethel

Martin Silver, Norway

Friends of the Robinson House

(Donors of up to \$499)

Robert Albota, Ottawa, Ontario; Esther Anderson, Brockton, MA; Bradley and Judith Barker, Bethel; Jean Barker, Delray Beach, FL; John and Mary Beth Bayerlein, Bethel; D.A. Bean Enterprises, Bethel; Bessie Bennett, Bethel; A.W. and Florine Bowden, Bethel; Norma Buck, Oxford; Donald and Mary Calderwood, Mesa, AZ; Cathy Canavan, Cool, CA; Rosalind Chapman, Bethel; Donald M. Christie, Jr., M.D., Poughkeepsie, NY; Norman and Sylvia Clanton, Bethel; Allen and Jacquelyn Cressey, Chelmsford, MA; Eva Conroy, Auburn; Richard and Carole Duplessis, Bethel; Katheryn Eames, Cape Elizabeth; Raymond Fales, Waitsfield, VT; Jane Fife, Salt Lake City, Utah; John and Julia Fox, West Newton, MA; Allan Fraser, Bethel; Doris Fraser, Bethel; Marion Gates, Ann Arbor, MI; Wilma Gorman, Bethel; Rupert and Suzanne Grover, Norway; Carolyn and Tom Harrison, Portland; Michael and Leslie Hathaway, Conway, NH; Florence Hastings, Bethel; Clayton and Helen Heath, Norway; Pamela S. Heydon, Wilton, CT; Scott Heydon, Shaker Heights, OH; Elizabeth Hines, Brooklin; Adolf U. Honkala, Midlothian, VA; Kathy McLeod Hooke, Bethel; Richard and Jane Hosterman, West Bethel; Vernon Ingraham, Wareham, MA; Charlotte K. Johnson, Westford, MA; Ardith A. Kelly, Salinas, CA; Earlon and Mary Keniston, Bethel; John Kubac, Bethel; Daisy LeClair, Bethel; Louise Lincoln, Bethel; James Locke, Topeka, KS; Michael Lovejoy, Norway; James and Ethel Mann, Lunenburg, MA; Mary March, Bridgton; Nancy H. Mercer, Bethel; Joann C. Mooney, London, UK; Marvin and Tineka Ouwinga, Bethel; Lillian Perkins, Bethel; Betty Barlow Prescott, Bangor; Eleanor Pugliese, Bethel; Dr. David Richards, Skowhegan; Beatrice Ritter, Torrington, CT; John and Lisa Robbins, Richmond; Dr. Ned Robertson, Cleveland Heights, OH; Persis Suddeth, Bowie, MD; Bertha Stevens, Bethel; Don and Peggy Tobin, Bandera, TX; Mary Valentine, Bethel; Mary Wheeler, Bethel; Elizabeth Delano Whiteman, Philadelphia, PA; Ruth Wight, Bethel; Willard and Sylvia Wight, Newry; Eleanor Wilson, Bryant Pond.

Twitchell Family Challenge

Mrs. Roxanne Twitchell Sly has issued a challenge to all Twitchell descendants to join her in contributing enough to have one of the rooms named after the Twitchell family. The minimum price of a room is \$25,000. Anyone wishing to learn more about this challenge is encouraged to call the society (800) 824-2910 or use E-Mail: (history @ bdc.bethel.me.us).

Please send all tax deductible contributions to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.

JOIN THOSE LISTED ABOVE IN HELPING TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY! PLEASE SEND YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION NOW!

THE ELMS PROPERTY

The "Elms" of Bethel Inn stands beside the current Society headquarters, the Dr. Moses Mason House on Broad Street. In September 1997, the Society launched an ambitious project to acquire, renovate and provide for operations of this building as a proposed addition to its facilities. Named for the original owner of the house O'Neil Robinson (1797-1867), the building would then be known as the Robinson House. This would provide critically needed space for exhibits, expanded museum store and craft operations, more adequate research room and collection storage as well as an education room for all ages. This addition would also allow the Society to expand its focus to become a truly Northern New England institution and establish its Center for Regional History with programming, conferences, publications, exhibits, lectures, etc. relating to that region.

BOOK REVIEW

THE MOUNT ZIRCON MOON TIDE SPRING: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY by Randall H. Bennett. (Bethel, Maine: By the Author, 1997. Pp. xii, 101. Paper. \$19.95)

With today's newspaper headlining "Moontide Festival Opens," it is a fitting time to review Randall Bennett's latest book which, among other things, explains the fascinating origin of the "Moontide" name.

This well-illustrated story of one of America's oldest commercial springs weaves together a number of different threads: promotional and marketing strategies for the spring water itself, evolution of Mt. Zircon as a focal point for hotels and summer tourism, and the individual men and women involved with the enterprise as well as their lives and interconnections. The way the various threads are woven, as the story unfolds, arouses the reader's curiosity to find out what finally happened to the various people, the structures, and the spring itself.

Long regarded as one of the Northeast's most unusual natural landmarks because of the reported cyclic fluctuations in its flow, the Spring in Milton Plantation (near Rumford) was officially opened in the 1850s by Dexter D.W. Abbott, a cousin by marriage to Hiram Ricker of Poland Spring fame. Abbott's mountain retreat, which featured a large wooden hotel and two bowling alleys, vanished in flames in 1872, but the mineral water continued to be shipped out of Maine to the delight of hotel guests along the East Coast, many of whom were convinced of its medicinal qualities. By the 1890s a bottling house had been built on Mt. Zircon and carbonated beverages began to be produced using the famed spring water. This continued until recent times when the spring was closed.

In addition to being an entertaining story, the book should be of real value to historians and other researchers. The author's thorough research and documentation, and his care in distinguishing between facts and surmise, are to be commended. Profusely illustrated including drawings by the late Seaverns Hilton, the book also includes a useful index. A number of the photographs are from the Bethel Historical Society's collection and visitors to the town are encouraged to come and see the restored Mt. Zircon bottle lunch stand (ca. 1922) on the lawn next to the Dr. Moses Mason House.

Walter Hatch



Rebecca and Thomas Zicarelli, owners of the former Alpine House property dating from the mid-1880s, pose with Preservation Committee Chair Ken Bohr (right) after receiving the 1998 Bethel Historical Society Preservation Award for their outstanding stewardship of a historical property.

SOCIETY RECEIVES \$75,000 CHALLENGE GRANT FOR THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

A \$75,000 challenge grant from the Bingham Betterment Fund was awarded to the Society in March, which will cover a three year period and provide a dollar for dollar match of \$25,000 for each of the three phases of the project (purchase, renovation, and endowment of the Regional Center).

"This is definitely good news for our capital campaign efforts," said Society president Walter Hatch in announcing the grant. "It will stimulate other giving as we move forward toward our goal," he predicted.

"We're thrilled with this development," observed Susan Herlihy, Society trustee and chair of the Capital Campaign Committee, who joined Society president Hatch in making the announcement. "We are very grateful to the Betterment Fund for their support and vote of confidence in supporting regional culture," she added.

BETHEL'S MAIN STREET THROUGH HISTORY: A HISTORICAL SURVEY

*By Rosalind R. Chapman
(Part 3, continued from the last issue)*

31. "Honest Corner" has been the site of a store for over a hundred years. It began as the home of Marshall Bonney, the early Bethel cabinetmaker. It was also the home of Hiram Allen. In 1836, the property was acquired by Gilman Chapman (1809-1885) for \$700. Mr. Chapman moved the building from this site down the street where it is now the home of Donald and Eleanor Brooks. The following year Chapman built the store on the corner and it had a series of owners before a fire destroyed it in December 1906: Gilman Blake (1820-1907), Moses Foster, Gilman P. Bean (1825-1911), George Furbush (acquired from Bean in 1904), and Guy L. Thurston, who purchased the building in May 1906. He sold Furbush's stock to G.W. Groves & Co. Furbush had installed a steel ceiling and two large plate glass windows in October 1904. The loss from the 1906 fire was estimated to be \$8000, which was partially insured. E.H. Young and E.E. Randall, who were next door, also suffered losses of \$2500 and \$2000 respectively. In 1908, Daniel Hastings (1840-1925) had the store rebuilt. Several other merchants had a store there Charles Lucas, who sold groceries here from 1909 to 1916, Llewellyn Ramsell (1878-

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Many readers will remember that in previous columns I have urged participation in town committees and forums aimed at preserving Bethel's character including its rich historical heritage.

Now it is time to thank everyone who has done just that. The new Bethel Comprehensive Plan which was passed at the June 10 town meeting makes clear the importance of the town's historical assets and presents recommendations for preserving them. Final implementation will require the development and passage of appropriate ordinances.

For the first time, there is a town-recommended designation of a Bethel Historical Area, the purpose of which is to manage change in the Bethel Historic District to conserve the District's unique values. Exterior alterations and redevelopment of structure would be undertaken in such a way as to maintain the important architectural values of the District.

Other provisions relate to structures and sites outside of the Historic District, some involving the Planning Board where changes in the Site Plan Review Ordinance are suggested. For other owners of historic properties, our Society has been asked to develop an educational program on voluntary techniques to maintain historic values.

Walter Hatch

IN MEMORIAM

Died, 3 January 1998, John Willard, Norway, former Society president

Died, 16 January 1998, Wilma Hall Quimby, Raymond, NH, Life Member

Died, 16 January 1998, Marie Brown, Bethel, Life Member

Died, 20 January 1998, Harold Chapman, Lancaster, PA, Senior Member

Died, 20 January 1998, Beatrice Grover, Bangor, Senior Member

Died, 24 January 1998, Ruth Watson, Gouldsboro, Contributing Member

Died, 15 February 1998, Dorothy Keddy Small, Portland, Life Member

Died, 24 February 1998, Dorothy Brinck, Norway, Life Member

Died, 29 March 1998, June Brown Greig, Bethel, Sustaining Member

Died, 7 April 1998, Louise Clough, Concord, NH, Senior Member

Died, 18 April 1998, George Noll, Bethel, Life Member

Died, 19 April 1998, Olive Anderson, Newry, Honorary Member

Died, 7 June 1998, John Bean, Williamsburg, VA, Senior Member

1937) who leased the premises and continued the Lucas store beginning in 1916, Philip Burns, Ralph Young, Maurice McInnis, Stuart Martin, Paul Shaw and Harry Dunn. Dr. Francis Tuell had his dental office upstairs after the Pushard building burned. Dr. E.L. Brown and Dr. John

(continued on page 8)

SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. They may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents must include 6% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should add \$3 to cover mailing expenses.

Tile

Moses Mason House \$3.50

Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) \$2 each
(Moses Mason House, Bethel Railroad Station, Summer House, Bethel Covered Bridge)

Booklets (The Family Farm, Made in Bethel) 75 cents each

Dr. Moses Mason and His House \$1

Molly Ockett \$2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill \$2

1880 Map of Town of Bethel \$2

1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill \$1

1858 Atlas of Oxford County \$9.95

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Moses Mason Museum (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$8

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adults, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$8

Post Cards: Dr. Moses Mason, Agnes Mason, Moses Mason House 10 cents each

Tote Bags (Moses Mason Museum logo) small \$7.50 large \$11.50

Placemat, 4 season, set of four Bethel scenes \$7.50

Books

Adams & Glatz, *Young Wives Tales* \$19.95 Paper

Barnes, *Maine Life: The Photographs of N.C. Maxim* \$16.99 Paper

Bean, *East Bethel Road* \$50 Cloth

Bennett, *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History* \$39.95 Paper

Bennett, *The White Mountains* \$14.99 Paper

Bennett, *The Mt. Zircon Moon Tide Spring* \$19.95 Paper

Crosby, *From an Old Leather Trunk* \$5 Cloth

Crosby, *I Was A Summer Boarder* \$5 Cloth

Dickerman, *A Guide to Crawford Notch* \$12.95 Paper

Fraser, *A History of Maine Made Automobiles* \$34.95 Cloth

\$24.95 Paper

Gove, *J.E. Henry's Logging Railroads* \$25.95 Paper

Grumet, *Northeastern Indian Lives 1632-1816* \$19.95 Cloth

Hathaway, *Everything Happened Around the Switchboard*

\$13.95 Paper

Howe, *Concise History of the Maine State Grange* \$20 Cloth

Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House Barn: The Connected*

Farm Buildings of New England \$24.95 Paper

Hutchinson, *The Rumford Falls & Rangeley Lakes Railroad* \$20

Killgore, *Descendants of Joseph Killgore* \$65 Cloth

Lapham, *History of Bethel, Maine 1768-1890* \$45 Cloth

Lapham, *History of Woodstock, Maine* \$19.95 Cloth

Little, *American Decorative Wall Painting 1700-1850* \$9.95 Paper

Maine the Pine Tree State: *From Prehistory to the Present* \$29.95

Paper

Mills, *The Genealogy of Samuel & Frances (Pembroke) Mills*

Family \$5 Paper

Paris, Maine: *Second Two Hundred Years* \$45 Cloth

Parkman, *The Gould Academy Story* \$9.95 Paper

Proceedings of the Steamship College \$25 Paper

Russell, *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* \$15.95 Paper

Shirrefs, *The Richardson Lakes* \$29.95 Paper

Spaulding, *Historical Relics of the White Mountains* \$12.95 Paper

Stillinger, *Historic Deerfield* \$19.95 Cloth

Tolles, *Grand Resort Hotels of the White Mountains* \$50 Cloth

Visser, *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings*

\$19.95 Cloth

Whitney, *The World of C.A. Stephens* \$19.95 Paper

Wight, Carrie, *A History of Newry* \$5 Paper

Wight, Paula, *Newry Profiles* \$5 Paper

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012. If the items you ordered are in stock, they will be sent by return mail. For further information, please call toll free 1-800-824-2910.

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP LIST AS OF MAY 1, 1998

Honorary

Carolyn Brooks, Bethel; Arlene Greenleaf Brown, Bethel; Barbara H. Brown, Bethel; Julia Brown, Bethel; Elizabeth Mason Carter, West Bethel; Rosalind Chapman, Bethel; Allan Fraser, Bethel; Floribel Haines, Bethel; Florence Hastings, Bethel; Geraldine Howe, Bethel; Rodney Howe, Bethel; Gertrude Hutchins, Bethel; Virginia Hutchins, Bethel; Mary Keniston, Bethel; Louise Lincoln, Bethel; Helen Morton, Newry; Persis Post, Bethel; Marguerite Quinn, Norway; Randal Stevens, Bethel; Sarah Stevens, Bethel; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Bethel; Edmond Vachon, Bethel; Sudie Vachon, Bethel; Willard Wight, Newry; Edna York, Bethel

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DIARY OF WILLIAM S. HASTINGS

(continued from the last issue)

1935--March 1, -10 [degrees] Clear and calm. Bob hauling wood. I started to put electric bell in schoolhouse. Went to Norway in p.m. Had Dr. Swett treat my back. March 2, +26 [degrees] Warm and cloudy. Bob in Portland. Bought a potato planter and 2 horse cultivator of A.W. Walker. Both used but in good condition. Iron Age planter and McCormick Deering cultivator. Brought home our plow which Walkers had. March 3, 20 [degrees] Windy, squally. Real March weather. Installed electric bell in schoolhouse. Installed a batter of small drawers in my tool room. March 4, +12 [degrees] Clear, calm and cold. Town Meeting Day. Warmed up fast. Town Board Ernest Bisbee, Carroll Abbott and John Howe. John should have been first. Put up a load of spuds. Grange meeting in evening. Got appointed chairman of committee for Pomona at Bear River next month. Snowing. March 5, 25/28 [degrees] Cloudy. Bob in City. I took Ruth to dentist. Rained a little. Put up spuds in p.m. March 6, +26 [degrees] Cloudy. Slippery. Hauled last load of logs from swamp. Snapped bones out in my back. Went to Norway in p.m. Saw Dr. Swett. Stayed night at Uncle Orvern's. Cleared and was quite warm. State road nearly all bare but there is plenty of ? March 7, +2 [degrees] Clear and cool. Stayed in Paris until afternoon. Brought Uncle John [Fifield, his mother's brother] up to Fosters. Melted alot in roads. There is plenty of snow. Banks are 10 ft. high between Otter Brook and Bean's Corner. March 8, -10 [degrees] Clear. Bob in Portland. No demand for spuds. Price 55 cents per cwt. Took Ruth to Bethel to dentist. Norway to see Swett. March 9, -8 [degrees] Clear. Made the weekly delivery trip to Bethel. Crew in wood cutting birch. I'm laid up. Can't lift. March 10, +10 [degrees] Cloudy. Looked like snow, but only a trace fell. Greenwood. Incubator tested. 40 out. 205 left now. March 11, 24-33 [degrees] Clearing and warmer. Tinkered farm machinery all day. Bob hauled birch to Bethel. March 12, +30 [degrees] Warm. Worked on harrow. Farm Bureau meeting in p.m. Put up spuds. March 13, +30 [degrees] Snowing and windy. Bob in Portland. Put up spuds. Finished clearing my cellar [of potatoes]. March 14, +15 [degrees] Windy and cool. Have chance to furnish 500 bags spuds per week @ 45 cents per cwt in Portland. They go to Boston. Market dropping. Wholesale market says 60-65 cents Bethel. 1800-2000 bu. to go. Set incubator. 288 eggs. March 15, -5 [degrees] Clear and cold. Capn. Russ [Swan] moves today. Bob in Portland. Brought home cultivator. March 16, +10 [degrees] Cloudy in a.m. Cleared and was warm and sunny. We put up see potatoes and 2nds for Howard Gunther. I went to Norway for my weekly treatment. March 17, +36 [degrees] Clear and sunny with a warm South wind. Snow settled alot. Road getting bare. Went to Greenwood. Colder at night. Windy. March 18, +10 [degrees] Windy and cold. Put up spuds. Set up a brooder in the cellar. March 19, +12 [degrees] Cloudy. Bob gone to Bangor on P.C.A. business. Hauling manure to Crow Piece. Snow is plenty deep on old road. March 20, +28 [degrees] Clear and warm. First robin of year. Hauled manure. Snow going fast but plenty left. Roads getting pretty hard in places. Chicks are hatching. March 21, +25 [degrees] Cloudy. Red sky in morning. More manure. Snowed some but didn't make any amount. Put up spuds. Portland market quotes 55-60 cents per cwt. We get 20-25 cents below that. March 22, +32 [degrees] Squally and windy. Awful wind. Tailend of great dust storm in the Middle-west. Roads are getting no better fast. March 23, +15 [degrees]

Calm and cool. Bob in Portland. Went to Norway to Swett. He is helping my back. Took harrow boxes back to A.W. Walker. Roads rough. Took Ruth to dentist. March 24, +28 [degrees] Windy as heck. Tinkered around all day. March 25, +18 [degrees] The Bobs started for Farm and Home Week at Orono. Mary Alice and Virginia are here. Cold and windy. March 26, +15 [degrees] Windy and colder. Miserable weather. Got 100 chix from Red Feather Farm. 180 in brooder now. Put up spuds. Market dull. Price about 27 cents per bu. in city. March 27, +12 [degrees] Windy but warmer. Hauled limbwood in p.m. March 28, +22 [degrees] Calm and cloudy. Hauled wood in a.m. Killed veal and put up spuds. Started snowing about 3:30 p.m. Regular blizzard. March 29, +21 [degrees] Clear and windy. 5" of snow. Blowing some. Bob and rest came home. Bob had two axes he won as prizes in the chopping contest. Went to Swett for my last treatment. Roads bad. Rain at night. March 30, +20 [degrees] Cold and windy. Put up spuds in a.m. Bethel in p.m. Bob in Portland. March 31, +27 [degrees] Warm and calm. Lovely spring day. Snow has settled alot. Dooryard partly bare.

(To be continued in the next issue)

1998 ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN

Margaret Joy Tibbetts, chair of the 1998 Annual Fund Campaign, and her committee, Barbara D. Brown, John B. Head, Alden T. Kennett, and E. Louise Lincoln are once again requesting contributions to the Society to help balance the budget and keep support for programs and projects strong. Contributions may be in any amount and are tax deductible as allowable by law. Those wishing to make a donation in memory or in honor of someone special are urged to send it to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217-0012. All donors will be listed in the winter issue of the *Courier*.

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THE BETHEL SOLDIERS OF '61

From the pages of the OXFORD ADVERTISER, 8 October 1886, compiled by Judge C.F. Whitman of Norway

The election is over and we will resume our narrative of the Bethel soldiers of the Fifth Maine. I followed where the "White Plume" leads but though opposed politically to the gallant Gen. Edwards, there is nothing which so fittingly expresses my feeling towards him as the following allusion to John Bright by that eminent English statesman Wm. E. Gladstone during the last election of the members of the British Parliament: "I will never utter a word to disparage the man, whose integrity I revere, whose character I love, and who has conferred upon his country services which cannot be forgotten."

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Victoria Coolidge, Bethel; Justin Gilbert, Bethel; Erica Gunderson, Bethel; Christopher Hart, Bangor; Eiranne Hart, Bangor; Rebekah Howe, Bethel; Eli Mann, Bethel; Erin Murphy, Bethel; William Murphy, Bethel; Kate Nickerson, Bethel; Sarah Vedella, Bethel; Jessie Wight, Bethel; Justin Wight, Bethel

Individual Preference

Albert Buck, Oxford; Norma Buck, Oxford; Roger Conant, Bethel; Molly Dougherty, Orr's Island; Dr. James Hudson, Newcastle; Patricia Hudson, Newcastle; H. Merrill Luthe, Portland; Phyllis MacAulay, Newark, DE; Thomas MacAulay, Newark, DE; Jean Ness, Auburn; Norman Ness, Jr., Auburn; John Quinn, Dunstable, MA; Olive Risko, Bryant Pond; Raymond Scribner, Huntington, IN; Ruth Scribner, Huntington, IN; Henry Stewart, Boston; Patricia Stewart, Boston; Weld Historical Society, Weld; Richard Wiley, Jr., Laconia, NH

(Main Street, continued from page 3)

Trinward also had offices here. The Bishop sisters of Boston opened a millinery shop here in 1910. The Masonic Hall with its ornate tin ceiling was on the third floor until the Lodge moved in 1952 to the former Christian Science Church on Chapman Street. In 1891, the Post Office was on this site. An advertisement in 1935 indicates that Garard C. Williams was selling Delco radios, Maytag washers, and Frigidaire appliances here. In the late 1940s there was a store on the drug store side of the building called Larry's Army Navy Surplus Store. In the 1950s Edward P. Lyon had a jewelry shop here and later for a time there was ice cream sold here. During the late 1950s William "Bud" Lamson was here selling televisions. When Harry Dunn sold out his grocery business, the building was vacant until the early 1970s when John and Betty Willard purchased and renovated it, creating two apartments on the second floor and a gift and fabric shop on the first. Later Jeffrey Prest had a real estate office here. Other businesses here in more recent years include the Bethel Food Center, Edelweiss operated by Richard and Sheila Waterhouse and later by Hugh and Lynn Chapman, a wood and glass gallery run by Maureen Ginther, Skidder's Deli, and Keenan's. In 1996, the building was acquired by Robert Laux and is the site of his real estate business Wild River Realty in addition to apartments upstairs.

32. The Freeman Block stood on the site of the parking lot between the Hastings Block and the Drug Store. Upstairs in this building was the print shop of the *Bethel Courier*, the town's first newspaper which began in 1858 and ceased publication in 1861. N.T. True (1812-1887) was the editor; when he resigned as principal of Gould Academy and left Bethel, the newspaper died. This space was later Abbott's Jewelry Store, where a fire in 1867 burned a hole through the floor without causing a blaze. The *Courier* reported that an oyster saloon and confectionery store were being operated on the first floor by a Mr. Ayer. Subsequently, this building was replaced by Elmer Young's Harness Shop and Elmer Randall's Shoe Shop

(succeeded by Elmer Allen who operated in until 1942). In 1906 the building was damaged by the fire next door, but by August 1907, repairs were made and Elmer Young moved back into his old quarters. In 1915, the store of Elmer Randall was completely renovated by Elmer Young. His initial line of shoes were from A.H. Berry of Portland. Davis Lovejoy was hired as the clerk manager and G.L. Davis was retained as the repairman. Young continued to operate his own harness business. This was later used as the home of the George A. Mundt Post, American Legion until it moved to Vernon Street in the early 1970s. After the American Legion left, John and Betty Willard bought the building and razed it. Thomas LaRue (1877-1941) had a shoe repair business here from about 1918 until his death. He was succeeded by Royal Hodsdon for a short time and later Maurice McInnis. Prior to World War I, the telephone office was here briefly.

33. The Wiley Block, formerly known as the Swift Block, was built by Newton Swift (1823-1865), who came to town from Norway. It housed the Swift store and the post office in the area later used by the drug store. In 1858, Samuel Gibson (1823-1889) had a law office here and Patrick McCloskey operated a tailor shop on this site. It was Newton Swift's daughter who married Goodwin R. Wiley (1846-1911). He opened a pharmacy here in 1861. The Swifts lived in the apartment upstairs. W.E. Bosserman (1861-1948), the son of the Universalist minister, succeeded Wiley in the drug store in 1905. For well over forty years, Alton Carroll (1896-1973) handled the soda fountain and was the trusted pharmacist in Bosserman's. It was from the Bosserman estate (Dr. E.L. Brown had married Bosserman's daughter Mildred (1894-1961)) that Harold Clukey acquired the building and the business. The post office was in this building for many years until the late 1930s. In its place there was a beauty shop operated by Marilyn Abbott Gilbert and later Barbara Bartlett (Gallant). In the back Barbara Bartlett and Edith Tyler had a one room apartment. Later this was the site of Ruby Rolfe's Shoe Rack. William "Bud" Lamson also had a television sales and service business here. This space was later added to the pharmacy. Liscoe Hall had a barber shop here, beginning at the end of the 19th century. In 1895, he was advertising men's and women's haircuts in the Bethel News. In 1907, he sold his barbershop business to his brother Clarence (1860-1945). According to the Bethel Citizen for 10 April 1907, renovations and repairs were made before the new ownership opened for business. Clarence's son Fred (1888-1976) continued in business here until the late 1940s when Arthur "Spec" Guernsey succeeded Hall. Stanley Fox was the next barber here assisted by Jerry Emery. Charles Primozich acquired the pharmacy from Harold Clukey. He sold to the present owner David Preble.

34. The Karen Brown-Mohr house was built sometime prior to 1858 by Almon Godwin, who came here from Rumford. He was long an officer of the law in Bethel, familiarly known as "Blueberry Eye." His death was said to have been caused by taking the wrong medicine in the middle of the night. Without light he swallowed a bottle of iodine instead of the intended medicine and died on 31 May 1895. Tenants through the years have been Dr. Hill and his mother, then Dr. Sturtevant briefly, and finally Dr. R.I. Tibbetts (1875-1958), who practiced medicine in Bethel for over half a century. Dr. Tibbetts acquired the property from Ella Rowe (1853-1909) for \$2000. Following his death, his widow Pearl Ashby Tibbetts (1884-1982) continued to live here until her death. She was a resident in this house

for more than sixty five years. The present owner acquired the property from the Tibbetts family. Part of the house is now rented.

35. Gilman Chapman built a house on the spot where the Queen Anne Style house stands today, now owned by Patricia Thurston. Chapman's house was a white one with large pillars on the front, much like the previous one. From the Chapman estate the house was sold to John Philbrook (1840-1923), who had it moved to the site of the Gould parking lot on Elm Street. An item in an 1893 issue of the *Oxford Advertiser* described Philbrook as a cattle dealer who "knows how to handle cows and oxen at one glance...he can tell how much that ox weighs, how many pounds of tallow he will have, and how much his hide will weigh." That same year, he was described in the *Oxford Advertiser* as the cattle dealer who "has sent more cattle to the [Brighton] market than any man in the state." In 1895, Philbrook undertook construction of the present house at a cost of \$8000. Gilbert Tuell (1854-1918) was the contractor. The Philbrooks moved into the house in January 1896 according to the *Oxford Democrat*. The next month the *Democrat* for 19 February 1896 recorded: "Many friends and relatives assembled at the elegant residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Philbrook to witness the marriage of their daughter Edith to Dr. Frank Brown of South Portland, formerly of Bethel." For many years after the Philbrooks' death, the house stood empty. In 1938, Clarence Bennett (1891-1947) bought the property and built the garage adjoining the lot. Wilfred "Pete" and Margaret Bennett Baker lived upstairs. She was town clerk here from 1949 to 1957. Between 1957-1968, her mother Violet (1899-1988) succeeded her after serving as her deputy. She operated the town clerk's office here until the office was moved to the Cole block. In 1969, she sold the premises to Gould Academy and it was used for faculty housing (Donald and Ruth Feeney once lived here) until it was acquired by Early Real Estate, who sold to Sandra Mahon. She made extensive renovations to the property before selling after a fire in August 1993 to the present owner Patricia Thurston, who has landscaped and restored the building to its former grandeur.

36. The garage on this site, built by Clarence Bennett in 1938 to service and sell Chevrolet vehicles, was demolished in 1995. It was built by Clarence Bennett in 1938. It was later long owned by Ernest Angevine, who ran a snowmobile, chain saw, and small engine repair business before selling to Edleen Winslow, who operated Charlie's

(continued on page 11)

EDITOR'S CORNER

In the last issue, I compiled a list of four women in the Hastings and Howe families bearing the name "Agnes," whose name must have been originally inspired by the wife of Dr. Moses Mason, Agnes Straw Mason (1793-1869). Barbara Hastings Honkala has brought to my attention another Agnes who should have been listed. She is Agnes Hastings Dodge (1866-1925), daughter of Moses Mason (1834-1917) and Louise Gould (1846-1917) Hastings. Moses Mason Hastings was a nephew of Agnes Straw Mason and was undoubtedly named for her husband, Dr. Mason. A gifted painter of china, Agnes Hastings Dodge married Fred Dodge (1860-1932) and is buried with her husband in Woodland Cemetery, Bethel. SRH

(Bethel Soldiers of '61, continued from page 7)

I confess to a strong friendship that no political crisis will ever shake. I see him as he stood at Rappahannock Station and in the charge at Spottsylvania and while life lasts shall revere him as among the heroes of the Republic.

We left the Fifth Maine behind the defenses of Malvern Hill. Just before the battle, having been covering the rear of the army during the greater part of the retreat. They were relieved from this duty and placed in reserve from this duty and placed in reserve to keep open the line of retreat to the James River.

The great assault of the enemy on our forces at Malvern Hill was made and he was repulsed with fearful slaughter. A hundred guns had swept away the yelling lines of the Rebels as the autumn leaves by the hurricane. Instead of advancing as our troops could have done and perhaps have taken Richmond they retreated to Harrison's landing in such haste as to leave many of our wounded behind to be taken by the Confederates. During the night, the Fifth Me. received the order to move immediately and they were reluctantly compelled to go without. Capt. Harris Co. G which had been sent out on picket, but the next day about noon its captain brought it into camp to the surprise and joy of the men, as it was expected that the company had fallen into the hands of the enemy. The troops moved back into an immense wheat field at the landing. The rain fell in torrents and under the tramp of many feet not a spear of wheat could be seen. It was on the bank of the James and the gunboats in the river protected the army from assault. The Rebels whether in the East or West had a wholesome fear of the Union gunboats.

Harrison's Landing is the birthplace of Gen. Wm. Henry Harrison, the hero of the battle in which the Indian Chief Tecumseh was slain, and the ninth President of the United States. Not far from the large mansion called the Harrison House on the Chickahominy River was an enclosure on which was this legend: "Here Capt. John Smith was captured by the Indians." Painted on a board in another enclosure on the same river was the following: "On this spot Capt. John Smith's life was saved by Pocahontas."

While it was stationed at the Landing President Lincoln visited the army. In a letter to his wife, Capt. Edwards says of this visit: "Since I wrote you last [the] President has been here. He still wears the old stove pipe hat. He is one of the best men the sun ever shown upon."

The erection of fortifications were immediately begun when the army reached the James and the soldiers of the Regt. had their full share in building them. The work had to be done in the night time on account of the extreme hot and sultry weather. Capt. Edwards acted as Lieut. Colonel. First Lieut. Walker obtained a furlough for twenty days and second Lieut. Sanborn was in command of the Bethel Company, but as he was sick Capt. Edwards had in addition to his other duties to look after it. For the first time since he had been in the service he had a horse to ride and a nice cot to sleep on. His tent was tastefully fitted up and on a little table used as a writing desk were a copy of military tactics, "The Life of John Randolph of Roanoke" and the "Portland Transcript." He had never seen a sick day since he had been in the Army. "I have just been in to dinner," he writes on the 11th of July, 1862, "I still mess with Lieut. Sanborn and Jimmy my trusty servant who is at pre-

(continued on page 10)

(Bethel Soldiers of '61, continued from page 9)

sent our cook. I have tea, toast, cheese, and molasses rounds, so you see we are living well again but it costs a great deal. Butter is \$.50 per pound, cakes are \$.30 per doz., cheese is \$.40 per lb., lemon is \$.15 a piece and oranges the same. What I have bought of the sutlers was obtained for about half what privates have to pay for the same article.

"I hear the roar of cannon down the river and I presume some of the rascals are firing into our transports as they are passing up and down the James, but they will get enough of that kind of business in a day or two. The 'Daniel Webster' was fired into yesterday and a solid shot went through her boiler, but there was no damage done.

I see by the papers that drafting may soon be the order of the day in Maine, and if so I hope it will take some of those lazy devils who have been looking on and finding fault with everything.

I expect you will see Lieut. Walker before you get this. He will tell you of our week's marching and fighting and I might add starving. One little incident I must tell you. On Monday the 30th ult. after the battle of Charles City Cross Roads, after having advanced and found no enemy we moved back on to the field to hod through the afternoon. I found Jimmy with a handful of half boiled beans awaiting my return. Holding them out in his hands he said, 'Do Capt. take them. They will help keep life in you. I is all I have.' As he said this, tears came into his eyes. The poor fellow suffered more than I did for I lived on excitement for five days and had scarcely any appetite as long as I went without sleep, but we are finally out of it now and all is going right again.'

On the 17th of July he writes again: 'There were ten mules killed within a few rods of my tent in the shower of last night, by one bolt of lightening, so I began to think that even mules cannot stand everything.' I hear that they must resort to a draft in Maine to get its quota of troops. I hope it isn't so, while such states as Mass., New York, Penn. and Ohio furnish theirs by volunteers. But the most disgraceful thing I have yet heard of is that of young men from Maine leaving the State to Canada. I do not believe it. No, no, it cannot be. I blush with shame when I think of it. The idea of men sneaking away to Canada to get rid of the draft. Shame on such fellows, who had rather see the best government the sun ever shown upon go to destruction than face the bullets of the enemy. I would rather be in a Rebel prison than be guilty of such conduct. Such men are a disgrace to the State. If this report is true I hope they will stay in Canada and never come back to further disgrace their families. I hear that hundreds have left. I dare not go into camp but ours, for fear that someone will ask me what state I am from. I have been asked that question already. Can I now look a soldier in the face and say I am from Maine? These fellows who are troubled with the Canada fever have immortalized their names and got a mark as lasting as that of Cain.

I have just been to the camp of the 6th Maine to see Uncle Thompson (Rev. Zenas Thompson) but he had left for Maine. Perhaps you will see him before this reaches you. The old man went to our old camp to see me before starting for home, and was out in that awful storm in which the mules were killed. He missed me of course. He left for his eastern home at 8 o'clock this morning. May the blessings of heaven attend him and his through life.



Bessie Bennett holding great-grandson Bennett Mason Dorion

MEMBER PROFILE

Bessie Bennett

Born in her grandfather's house in Rumford Corner village, the daughter of Carl and Winnie (Robinson) Heath, Bessie Bennett spent her earliest years at South Waterford before moving back to Rumford, where she graduated from Stephens High School in 1941. Later that year she married Lester Bennett, who died in 1987. For many years they made their home in the Virginia section of Rumford, where they owned and operated a service station. They had two children, Sandra (Bennett) Mason and Randall Bennett, the Society's Curator of Collections.

A member of the Society since the mid-1970s, Bessie has resided on Evergreen Road in Bethel since July 1990 where she enjoys gardening and cooking. The fifth generation of her family to make a home in Bethel, she has long served as a Society volunteer, working on *Courier* mailings, as well as projects in the office and research room. For many years, she has also seen to it that the period rooms in the museum and meeting room kitchen of the Dr. Moses Mason House are neat and tidy. A frequent contributor to the Annual Fund and a Capital Campaign donor, she recently assisted in the installation of the Society's major summer exhibit, "The Way Life Should Be," focusing on Maine at the turn of century.

(Bethel Soldiers of '61)

You speak of some of the soldiers playing sick. Perhaps this may be true in some cases, but not in all. Many poor fellows have stayed here till death has marked them for its victim. Then it is too late to return home. It was so with poor Dollof. It came nearly being so for Serg. F. Harmon. And if Lieut. Walker had not gone when he did, he would have been one of the number I have just mentioned.

You say if it is possible for me to get out of it. You wish me to do so. But them, my country calls quite as loud. What is a home without a government? It is not the present generation alone we are fighting for, but for untold millions yet unborn and destined to fill our places. If there are any in the North so base as not to wish to see the government sustain itself, they are traitors and deserve the halter or the halter is deserving of them.'

In July, the sick of the Regt. numbered about 60, out of from four to five hundred men. Fifteen were in the hospital--the rest in tents. Lieut. Brown of the 7th Maine (for

(Bethel Soldiers of '61)

whom the G.A.R. Post at Bethel was named) gave their number of sick at 150, and Col. Burnham of the 6th Maine had about as many more.

The following incidents of army life at the landing is worth revealing: One day Penley, the hero of the egg story related in a former article, went out on a foraging expedition and came back into camp laden with provisions which he had procured by passing patent medicine advertisements in the shape of bills, which the parties supposed were greenbacks, and for which he had received in addition to his provision silver "to make change." "And Capt.," he said giving an account of the affair, "I felt ashamed of myself for allowing them to even think I paid them anything."

On another occasion, when Capt. Edwards was conversing with one of the soldiers, the latter remarked: "Capt., what a damned fool I am. I might just as well have been chaplain of the 95th Penn. Regt. as to be here doing nothing. Col. Goselin offered me the place, but I thought I could do better as sutler."

(to be continued in the next issue)

(Main Street, continued from page 9)

Place here before selling to the present owner Patricia Thurston.

37. In 1858, J.E. Small "Daguerian Artist" had his shop on the lower corner of Main and what is today Elm Street. Later the house was owned and occupied by Charles Johnson, the postmaster. On the 1880 map the house is marked "Johnson Heirs." Mrs. Frances Tuell's sister Annie was Mrs. Johnson, and Mildred Tuell Carlson was born here in the 1880s. Anne Maria Robertson (1843-1944), daughter of Sylvester Robertson (1815-1905), the early Bethel cabinetmaker, bought the property from the Johnson heirs and lived in an upstairs apartment until her death in 1944 at the age of 101. John Brown recalls that several generations of youngsters on their way to the Bethel Grammar School and/or Gould Academy could look up

and see Ann Maria at her upstairs window with its view up Main Street. Frank and Mabel Robertson lived downstairs for many years and in later years Mrs. Robertson operated a bakery. Gus and Vera Gallant once lived upstairs. The house was razed in 1959 to provide parking for patrons of the new Thunderbird Motel.

38. Sylvester Robertson (1815-1905), Bethel's early cabinetmaker, had a shop and house on this site. His house was one of Bethel's oldest and was set back from the street. In 1905, Robertson's daughter, Anne Maria (1843-1944), sold the house following her father's death to Lettie Thayer in 1905, specifically exempting Sylvester Robertson's shop, which was to be moved from the site by 1 May 1906. Lettie Thayer (1856-1939) sold to Nellie Sturtevant in 1909, Angelia Mason Clark (1838-1930) was the next owner, acquiring the property in 1911. Her son Irving (1866-1952) lived here for many years. He, Ruby Clark, and others transferred the property to Percy Robertson in 1938. The house and lot were sold in 1940 by Robertson to Max Zallen, who constructed a theater on the front of lot. The house was then occupied by Louis and Florice Paul, Louis Paul being the projectionist for the theater. Frederick Grover (1913-1971) was the manager of the facility which enjoyed much success until the popularity of television reduced movie audiences to the point that it was no longer economically profitable. Zallen converted the theater to a motel, "The Thunderbird" in 1959, which operated for several years. During this project, the old Clark house was moved to the rear of the theater structure and incorporated as part of the motel operation. In 1966, the motel was purchased by Gould Academy for additional dormitory space, but in 1977, this was no longer needed and the property was sold to a firm which developed the property for senior housing. After more construction, it became the Bethel House in the early 1980s. The Clark house was moved down Elm Street to its present location. Fitzmaurice Vail and the Norman Hall family were once tenants here.

39. The house where Donald and Eleanor Brooks live today was brought down from "Honest Corner" as previously stated. It became the Methodist parsonage in 1881,

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(Main Street, continued from page 11)

purchased from Nathan Ethridge (1816-1892), and remained so until the new parsonage was built on Mason Street in 1924. Subsequent owners have been Norman (1880-1949) and Hester (1884-1959) Sanborn, Edwin Barnard, and the present ones Donald and Eleanor Brooks. At one time, Eva Bean had an apartment on the second floor.

40. The first building on this lot was built for E.G. Goddard, who had a cabinet shop adjacent to the lot. Mr. Goddard was also the town undertaker. The house was probably built in 1883 as the *Oxford Democrat* reported that year that "Mr. Goddard is buying furniture for his new house." Goddard was described in the *Oxford County Advertiser* in 1890 as "indignant over the affair of the Indian shot in the circus...because they did not give him the job to bury him." He also sold furniture from this location. An item in the 25 October 1892 issue of the *Oxford Democrat* notes that "E.B. Goddard is building quite an extensive addition to his furniture establishment on Main Street." Later the property was purchased by Hanno Packard (1862-1936) from Pinckney Burnham (1814-1892), who acquired it from Goddard. He erected a small building in the yard, which was used as a mortuary room. The *Oxford Democrat* of 10 April 1894 recorded: "Hiram Perkins opens a barber shop this week in the front room of the Packard Building near E.B. Goddard's." In 1913, fire destroyed the main house. The Packards lived temporarily in the undertaking office. Fred S. Tibbetts, also an undertaker, bought the lot and built the house, which burned in a spectacular fire in March 1963. Hanno Packard and Fred Tibbetts had a public disagreement over the terms of the sale and in 1914, the *Bethel Citizen* published the fact that a permanent injunction had been issued restraining Packard from carrying on any undertaking business within a fifteen mile radius of Bethel so long as Tibbetts remained in business. In the 1920s, Elmer Allen (1880-1961) purchased the Tibbetts property and made extensive alterations, creating three apartments. Among the tenants were Francis "Bun" Fogg, Larry and Rose Sanders, Francis "Red" and Harriett Noyes, Vernon and Maxine Brown, Eugene and Eunice Roy, Herbert and Edith Rowe, Albert and Beatrice Grover, Kenneth Wing, Viola Lord, Richard and Elsie Waldron. Allen willed the property to Harvey Sweetser, who owned it at the time of the fire. Following



The Almon Godwin Homestead, Main Street, ca. 1900, Courtesy of Margaret Joy Tibbetts (See #34)

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the fire, Doris Bryant (1905-1981) purchased the lot and a new brick building was built for Bryant's I.G.A., which opened in 1964. Her son Richard, the fourth generation of the Bryant family to operate the business, later transferred it to Everett Lidstone. It was once owned by David Olson and subsequently sold it to Carl and Pat Glidden, the current owners. The Gliddens added more space to the front of the building by making a major addition in the 1980s. Among the managers were Eugene Buswell and Alfred Spooner.

(To be continued in the next issue)

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